

Sūrah Muḥammad

Sūrah Muḥammad was revealed in Madīnah It has 38 Verses and 4 Sections.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 3

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿١﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
 آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
 وَأَصْلَحَ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ
 وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
 كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ ﴿٣﴾

Those who disbelieved, and prevented (others) from Allah's way, He (Allah) has rendered their deeds vain. [1] And those who believed and did righteous deeds and believed in that which is revealed to Muḥammad-and it is the truth (that has come) from their Lord-, He will write off their evil deeds, and will set aright their state of affairs. [2] That is because the disbelievers have followed falsehood, while the believers have followed the truth (that has come) from their Lord. This is how Allah explains their (respective) situations to the people. [3]

Commentary

Another name of Sūrah Muḥammad is Sūrah Al-Qitāl [Sūrah of war] because this Sūrah lays down the rules of Jihād and Qitāl [i.e. armed struggle in the cause of Allah]. This Sūrah was revealed immediately

after migration to Madīnah. Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه is reported to have said regarding Verse 13 كَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ "And how many a city ... have We destroyed!,..." that it was revealed in Makkah, because it was revealed at a time when the Holy Prophet ﷺ left Makkah with the intention of migration, and looked at the sacred city of Makkah and the Holy Ka'bah and said: "You are the dearest of all cities to me in the world. Had it not been for Makkans driving me out from this place, I would never have given up this Holy City." According to the technical parlance of the Qur'ānic commentators, verses revealed in the course of migration from Makkah to Madīnah are regarded as Makkī. In sum, the Sūrah was revealed immediately after migration to Madīnah, reaching there, ordinances relating to *jihād* and war with infidels were revealed.

In the phrase صَلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ "prevented (others) from Allah's way" (47:1), "Allah's way" refers to Islam. The phrase أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ "He (Allah) has rendered their deeds vain" (47:1) includes actions which are good in themselves, as for instance, helping and assisting the destitute, supporting and protecting the neighbours, generosity, charity and other good deeds. These deeds are, though, good and righteous in themselves, in the Hereafter they will yield benefit only if blessed with faith, because faith is a necessary condition for the credibility of good actions. Thus these righteous deeds will be of no use to the infidels in the Hereafter. The disbelievers take their comfort in this worldly life as a reward of their good deeds. In the Hereafter they will be punished with Hell-fire.

وَأَمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ

...and believed in that which is revealed to Muḥammad ...(47:2)

Although the previous sentence has referred to faith and righteous deeds which includes faith in the messengership of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the revelation that was sent down to him, this sentence specifies explicitly the fact that the actual basis of faith is to embrace all the teachings of the Last Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The word "بال" (*bāl*) in "وَأَضْلَحَ بِأَلْهَمِ...and will set aright their state of affairs..(47:2)" is sometimes used in the sense of state of affairs and condition, and at other times in the sense of heart. Here it could refer to both the senses. In the first sense, it means that Allah has set all their affairs aright, that is, He has set aright all their matters of this world and

of the Hereafter. In the second sense, it would mean that Allah has improved their hearts. This also has the same implication, that is, corrected all their works, because correction of works is a logical result of improvement of heart, both being necessary to each other.

Verse 4...

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثْخَتْتُمُوهُمْ فَسُدُّوا
الْوُثَاقَ ۖ فَمَا مَنَّا بَعْدُ وَإِنَّا فِدَاءٌ ۚ حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۗ

So, when you encounter those who disbelieve, then (aim at) smiting the necks, until when you have broken their strength thoroughly, then tie fast the bond, (by making them captives). Then choose (to set them free) either (as) a favour, or (after receiving) ransom, until the war throws down its load of arms...

Commentary

This verse lays down two points of law: first, it lays down that when war breaks the might and power of the enemy, and does away with their pomp and glory, they should be arrested rather than being killed. The Muslims are then given two options regarding the prisoners of war - either confer favour on them and release them without ransom or compensation; or release them against payment of ransom. There are several ways in which ransom may be taken, for instance by exchanging Muslim prisoners of war for non-Muslim prisoners of war. It is also possible to set them free after accepting pecuniary ransom. This injunction is apparently in conflict with the rule mentioned in Sūrah Al-Anfāl. The prisoners of the battle of Badr were released against the payment of ransom, but Allah disapproved and expressed His displeasure against those who opined in favour of releasing them on ransom. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said: "A grave punishment of Allah for this action of ours was very close, and if it had been meted out, no one besides 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb and Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh would have been spared, because only these two companions had disagreed with the idea of accepting pecuniary compensation for the release of the Prisoners of War (POW). (For details, see Ma'āriful Qur'ān, vol 4, pp 272-281). In short, the verses of Sūrah Al-Anfāl prohibits release of prisoners against ransom,

consequently their release without ransom would be prohibited all the more.

On the other hand, this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad permits both the alternatives. Therefore, most of the Companions and jurists express the view that this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad has abrogated the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl. Tafsīr Mazharī records this to be the opinion of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar, Ḥasan, ‘Aṭā’ رضی اللہ عنہم اجمعین and majority of the Companions and majority of the jurists. Among the jurists, Thawrī, Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad and Ishāq also hold this view.

Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ says that on the occasion of the battle of Badr, the number of Muslims was small. Therefore, releasing the prisoners against ransom or releasing them as a gesture of grace were both prohibited. Finally, when Islam and Muslims went on to achieve total ascendancy, Allah Ta‘ālā abrogated the earlier injunction, and revealed this verse which permits both options. Qāḍī Thanā’ullah cites this in his Tafsīr Mazharī confirming that this is the authentic and preferred view, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself acted upon it, and after him the Righteous Caliphs also did the same. Therefore, this verse repeals the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl - the reason being that the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl was revealed on the occasion of the battle of Badr which took place in the 2nd year of Hijrah. The prisoners that were released by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the battle of Ḥudaibiyah without ransom in the 6th year of Hijrah was in accordance with this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad.

It is recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ that about eighty Makkans climbed down the mount Tan‘īm with the intention of launching a sudden attack on the Messenger of Allah and the Muslim camp. They were all captured, but the Messenger of Allah set them free without any compensation, lest it became the cause of war on that critical occasion. At this, the following verse of Sūrah Al-Faṭḥ [48:24] was revealed:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَارْتَمَتْهُم مِّنْ مَّكَّةَ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُم عَلَيْهِمْ

"It is He who held their hands back from you, and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah, after giving you victory² over them."

According to one version, a popular view of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah is that setting the prisoners of war free with or without ransom is not lawful. Therefore, the Ḥanafī scholars regard this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad as abrogated by the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl. But Tafsīr Mazharī made it clear that the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl was revealed first, and the verse of Sūrah Muḥammad later - thus the later verse repealing the earlier verse. Therefore, the preferred view of Imām A'zam - in keeping with the opinion of the great majority of the Companions ﷺ and leading jurists - it is lawful, if it is in the best interest and well-being of the Muslims. From amongst the Ḥanafī scholars, 'Allāmah Ibn Humām shows his inclination towards this view in his Fath-ul-Qadīr. He writes that according to the version cited in Qudūrī and Hidāyah, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah does not see it permissible to set prisoners of war free against payment of ransom. But according to another version of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, cited in As-Siyar-ul-Kabīr, it is permitted in conformity with the majority view. Among these two versions, the latter is more likely to be his preferred view. Imām Ṭaḥāwī in his Ma'ānī-l-'Athār has also regarded the latter version as that of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

In sum, according to the majority of Companions ﷺ and jurists, neither of the verses under discussion is abrogated. The wordings of the verses of Sūrah Al-Anfāl and Sūrah Muḥammad leave us with the impression that none of these two can be called the abrogator or the abrogated. In fact, they are two injunctions for different situations. The leader of the Muslims may adopt either of the options depending on the conditions and needs of the Muslims. Qurṭubī, on the basis of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ practice and that of the Righteous Caliphs ﷺ, has shown that the prisoners of war were sometimes killed, sometimes enslaved, at other times they were set free against ransom, and yet at other times they were released without compensation. Exacting ransom includes exchange of non-Muslim POWs for Muslim POWs or setting non-Muslim POW free against pecuniary compensation. Having cited these cases, he says that verses that have been regarded as abrogator and abrogated are in fact *Muḥkam* or operative and perspicuous. Thus none of them is abrogated, because when the disbelievers are arrested and come into our control, the leader of the Muslims has four options: [1] if he deems appropriate, he may kill them ; [2] if he feels that it is in the best interest of the Muslims,

he may hold them in bondage; [3] if it is appropriate, he may release them in lieu of pecuniary ransom or in exchange of Muslim POWs ; and [4] if it seems proper, they may be released.

"This is the view of the scholars of Madīnah, Imām Shāfi'ī and Abū 'Ubayd. Imām Ṭaḥāwī cites this as the opinion of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah as well, although his generally known view is that which we have already mentioned. [Qurṭubī: V. 16, p. 228; sentence 16].

Four Options Regarding POW

The foregoing discussion makes clear that the leader of the Muslims has four options regarding prisoners of war. There is a consensus of the entire Ummah on the permissibility of killing them and holding them in bondage. Although there is some difference of opinion on the issue of setting them free against ransom or without ransom, majority of the jurists holds the latter options lawful as well.

The Issue of Slavery in Islam

A question arises here regarding prisoners of war. There are some juristic differences whether they could be set free, but there is no difference of opinion with regard to the permissibility of the latter two cases, i.e. killing them or holding them in bondage. Why did the Qur'ān not mention these two cases explicitly? It merely mentions the two cases where it is permissible to release them. Imām Fakhr-ud-dīn Rāzī responds to this in his Tafsīr Kabīr. He says that only those two options have been mentioned here which are not permissible to enslave Arab POW. Killing of the crippled is not lawful either. Besides, the question of killing has been dealt with elaborately earlier. [Tafsīr Kabīr: p. 508; v. 7].

Another point needs consideration: the permissibility of killing and enslaving was a common knowledge; all knew that the two cases are lawful. As opposed to this, the setting free of POW was prohibited on the occasion of the battle of Badr. On the present occasion, however, the intention was to permit them to be released with or without compensation. Here, there was no need to mention cases that were already known to be permissible. Therefore, these verses are silent about them. Thus, it is not correct to conclude from these verses that after their revelation, the permission to kill or enslave them has been abrogated. If the injunction to enslave had been abrogated, its prohibition would have been mentioned

somewhere in the Qurʾān or in a Ḥadīth. If this verse was an indication of its prohibition, then why were POW held in bondage by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and after him by the Companions ﷺ so ardently dedicated to Qurʾān and Ḥadīth, in a large number of battles after the revelation of the present verses? The narratives of enslaving are recorded in such large numbers in Ḥadīth and history with chains of transmission effectively uninterrupted that denying them would be unreasonable obstinacy.

An objection and its rebuttal

Let us now address the objection that Islam is the great upholder of human rights. Then how is it that it allows the enslaving of human beings?

This objection is a fallacy based on the false analogy drawn between Islamic concept of slavery and its practice in other religions and communities; whereas in Islam after the rights given to the slaves and the social status granted to them, they can hardly be called slaves in the generally accepted sense of the word. They in fact constitute a brotherhood. If the reality and spirit of Islamic concept of slavery is analyzed, we will realize that no better treatment can be meted out to POW than these instances found in Islamic history. A famous orientalist in his book *Arab Civilization* writes:

"When the word 'slave' is uttered in the presence of a European who is used to reading American writings, he conceives in his mind those helpless people who are shackled with chains, around whose necks are iron collars, who are lashed with whips and driven forth, whose food is barely enough to subsist, and for whom nothing more than dark dungeons are available to live in. I am not concerned here with how far this is true and to what extent atrocities committed by the British in America for the past several years fit the description . . . However, there is absolutely no doubt about the fact that Islam's concept of slavery is completely different from the Christian concept of slavery."

The truth of the matter is that in many instances there is no better solution than enslaving the POW, because if they are not enslaved, then logically there are three ways of sorting out the problem: either kill them, or set them free, or keep them as prisoners permanently. More often than not, all these three possibilities might not be in the best interest of the

Muslim Ummah. Killing them might not be appropriate because the POW might be a talented person and his talent would be wasted and lost. Setting him free might be risking the danger of his going away to Dar-ul-ḥarb and once again conspiring against the Muslims. Now there remains two options only: Either to keep him as a prisoner for good and confine him to some remote and separate island as has been the practice nowadays, or enslave him, make use of his talent and take full care of his human rights. It is obvious to every one which of these options is the best, especially since the Islamic viewpoint regarding slaves has been made plain in a famous Ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as follows:

أخوانكم جعلهم الله تحت أيديكم فمن كان أخوه تحت يديه فليطعمه مما يأكل
وليلبسه مما يلبس ولا يكلفه ما يغلبه فان كلفه ما يغلبه فليعنه (بخارى، مسلم،
ابوداود وغيرهم)

"Your slaves are your brothers, and Allah has put them under your control. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats, and dress him of what he wears. Do not overburden them [slaves] to do things beyond their capacity, and if you do so, then help them." [Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dawūd and others]

The social and civil rights that Islam has accorded to the slaves are almost equal to free individuals. Thus, as opposed to other nations, Islam has not only permitted the slaves to marry but also emphasized that the masters should marry off those of their slaves and slavegirls who are righteous [24:32] so much so that he can even marry a free woman. A slave's share from the spoils of war is equal to that of a free *mujāhid*. If he gives refuge to an enemy, it would be respected in the same way as given by a free individual. There are so many injunctions in Qur'ān and Ḥadīth regarding good treatment of slaves that if they are collected together, they can be compiled into a voluminous book. Sayyidnā 'Alī رضي الله عنه says that the last words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ before his departure from this earthly life were:

الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِيمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

"Take care of prayer; take care of prayer. Keep your duty to Allah regarding slaves under your command".

Islam organized education and training programme for slaves: its

effect was seen during the reign of ‘Abd-ūl-Mālik Ibn Marwān in almost all the provinces of Islamic State. Some of the best and greatest authorities on education and intellectual development were slaves whose chronicles are narrated in several history books. Furthermore, this nominal slavery was gradually abolished or reduced. There is a huge number of Qur’ānic verses and Holy Prophetic Traditions which set out the virtues and merits of setting the slaves free. There is no act better than emancipation of slaves. In juristic injunctions, pretexts have been looked for to emancipate slaves: expiation for violating fast, for murder, for *zihār*, for violating oaths and vows - in all these cases the first compulsory command is to emancipate a slave. A Ḥadīth tells us that if a person has slapped a slave, its expiation is to set him free. Thus, the Companions used to emancipate slaves in large numbers. The author of al-Najm-ul-Wahhāj gives us the following table of the slaves set free by the Companions:

1. Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضى الله عنها	69
2. Sayyidnā ‘Abbās ﷺ	70
3. Sayyidnā Ḥakīm Ibn Ḥizām ﷺ	100
4. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ	1000
5. Sayyidnā ‘Uthmān Ghani ﷺ	20
6. Sayyidnā Dhul-Kilā’ Al-Himyari ﷺ	8000 [in a day]
7. Sayyidnā ‘Abdurrahmān Ibn ‘Auf ﷺ	30 000 ¹¹

This table shows that only seven Companions ﷺ set free 39, 259 slaves. Obviously, thousands of other Companions ﷺ must have emancipated countless slaves.

To sum up: anyone who looks impartially at the comprehensive reforms Islam introduced in the system of slavery, he cannot escape the conclusion that drawing analogy between Islamic concept of slavery and its practice among other nations is absolutely false. In fact, permission to enslave POW after these reforms is a great boon to them.

Furthermore, holding POW in bondage is only up to the point of permissibility which means that if an Islamic State deems it appropriate, it may hold them in bondage, but it has not been taken as an obligatory or as a commendable act. As a matter of fact, the collective teachings of

Qur'an and Ḥadīth lead us to believe that emancipating them is more meritorious. Then this permission, too, extends up to the time the Muslims have not entered into a compact with the enemies. If there is an agreement with the enemies which includes a clause to the effect that neither the enemies will enslave Muslim POW nor will the Muslims enslave the enemy POW, the clause will be binding. In our times, many countries have entered into such covenants. If Muslim countries have participated in such covenants, it would not be lawful for them to enslave as long as this agreement stands.

Verses ...4 - 11

ذَلِكَ ۖ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانْتَصَرْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَكِنْ لِنَبْلُوًا بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ط
وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾ سَيَهْدِيهِمْ
وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٥﴾ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
فَتَعَسَا لَهُمْ وَاضِلٌ أَعْمَالُهُمْ ﴿٨﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٩﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ دَمَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ أَمْثَالُهَا ﴿١٠﴾
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ ﴿١١﴾

That (is the law). And if Allah willed, He would have (Himself) taken vengeance upon them, but (Allah ordered you to fight,) so that He may test some of you through some others. And those who are killed in Allah's way, He will never let their deeds go in vain. [4] (Instead,) He will guide them, and will set aright their state of affairs, [5] and will admit them to the Paradise He has identified for them. [6] O those who believe, if you will help (the religion prescribed by) Allah, He will help you, and will stabilize your footings. [7] As for those who disbelieve, (destined) for them is destruction, and He has rendered their deeds vain. [8] That is because they hate what Allah has sent down; therefore Allah has nullified their deeds. [9] Have they not travelled in the land so that they might

see how was the end of those before them? Allah brought utter destruction on them. And (ready) for (these) disbelievers are the likes thereof. [10] That is because Allah is the supporter of those who believe. As for the disbelievers, there is no supporter for them. [11]

Commentary

Wisdom in the Legality of Jihād

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْتَصَرْنَا لَهُمْ (And if Allah willed, He would have [Himself] taken vengeance upon them,...- 47:4) In this verse Allah says that legalizing of armed struggle in His cause against the infidels is a blessing as it replaces celestial punishments. The previous nations were punished with celestial and earthly calamities for their infidelity to Allah, for idolatry and for rebellion against Allah. The Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ could have suffered the same fate but the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a mercy unto mankind. as a result, the Ummah has been spared destruction by such general calamities. In place of them, *jihād shar'i* has been instituted. This, compared to general calamities, has many facilities and expedience. First of all, in general calamities the entire nation including men, women and children are decimated whereas in the case of Jihād according to the rules of war, women and children are safe and secure. As far as men are concerned, only those of the unbelieving men will have to face the believers who commit aggression and violence against those who protect the religion of Allah. Even among them not all men are killed, because many of them develop the ability to embrace Islamic faith, (or submit themselves as subjects of an Islamic state). Another wisdom in the institution of *Jihād* is that both the sides of war - Muslims and the enemies - are tested: which side is willing to sacrifice his life and wealth at the command of Allah and which side obstinately and stubbornly continues to reject the Truth or, having seen the crystal-clear evidence of Truth and being convinced by the Qur'ānic arguments, embraces Islam.

وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ (And those who are killed in Allah's way, He will never let their deeds go in vain. - 47:4) At the beginning of the Sūrah it was asserted that those who persist in infidelity and idolatry and obstruct others from practising Islam, Allah rendered all their good deeds void, such as charity, alms, donations, and philanthropic and public welfare activities, because these deeds are not worthy of reward in the Hereafter without faith. Faith is a necessary condition for good works to

be rewarded in the next world. As opposed to the case of the infidels, this verse asserts that those who sacrificed their lives to acquire the glorious privilege of a martyr in the cause of Allah - Allah will never imprint their works with irreverence, profanity or damnation. Even if they did commit sins, their sins will not have a negative impact on their good actions. In fact, often these good deeds of theirs will serve as an expiation for their sins.

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ (He will guide them, and will set aright their state of affairs - 47:5). This sentence refers to two of Allah's bounties: First, He will steer them by His guidance; and secondly, He will improve their conditions. The word "state of affairs" includes the conditions of both the worlds - those of this world and those of the Hereafter. Even if a Muslim did not acquire the glorious privilege of a martyr in this world, he too will receive the reward of a martyr; and in the Hereafter he will be spared the torment of the grave and the anxiety of resurrection. If he violated the rights of some human beings, Allah will take upon Himself the responsibility of vindicating him and clearing him of all blame. Steering them by His guidance through the Holy Prophet ﷺ means causing them to reach their desired destination which is the Paradise. The Qur'ān says that the inmates of Paradise, having entered the gardens of Paradise, will show their gratitude to Allah by saying:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا

"All praise to Allah who has led us unto this. [7:43].

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَفَهَا لَهُمْ (and will admit them to the Paradise He has identified for them. - 47:6). This is the third bounty of Allah. He will not only admit them into Paradise but will identify for them the gardens of bliss and will make them familiar with such bounties as houris and mansions in a way that it would seem to them that they have been living there since eternity. If such an acquaintance was not made, Paradise would have seemed a strange world. It would have taken them time to find their abode, to accustom themselves with the new environment, and they would not overcome the sense of unfamiliarity for a period of time.

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "By Him who sent me with the religion of Truth! As you are closely familiar with your wives and homes in this world, so you will know your abode

and your wives of Paradise - rather even better. Some reports of Ḥadīth tell us that an angel will be appointed for every single inmate of Paradise who will introduce them to their abode and wives in Paradise. Allah knows best.

وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ أَمثَالُهَا (And [ready] for [these] disbelievers are the likes thereof. - 47:10). Grammatically, the article "*alif lām*" in *al-kafirīna*" in this context is used to indicate some specific disbelievers, and refers to the infidels of Makkah. The purpose of this sentence is to warn them: as the previous generations were punished for their iniquity, so will you meet similar fate for your iniquitous behavior. Do not be unconcerned!

وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ (As for the disbelievers, there is no supporter for them. - 47:11). The word مولى "*mawlā*" is used in several different senses. One of its meanings is "protector" or "supporter". This is the sense in which it is used here. Another sense of the word is "owner/master". In Qur'an [10:30] we come across: رُدُّوْا اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَوْلٰهُمُ الْحَقَّ "They will be returned to Allah, their Master, the Truth" (10:30). In this phrase, Allah is called the "*mawlā*" of the infidels, that is, their Master / Owner because the mastership / ownership of Allah extends over all - the believers as well as the non-believers; without any exclusion.

Verses 12 - 15

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ
وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾ وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنْ قَرْيَتِكَ
الَّتِي أَخْرَجْتِكَ ۖ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ﴿١٣﴾ أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيْنَةٍ
مِّن رَّبِّهِ كَمَنْ زَيْنَ لَهُ سُوءَ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٤﴾ مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ
الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ
يَتَغَيَّر طَعْمُهُ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّرِيبِينَ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى
ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي

النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

Surely, Allah will admit those who believe and do good deeds to the gardens beneath which rivers flow. And those who disbelieve enjoy (the worldly life), and eat as cattle eat, and the Fire is the final abode for them. [12] And how many a town, stronger in might than your town that has expelled you, have We destroyed! Then, there was none to help them. [13] Then, can one who holds on to a clear proof from his Lord be like those for whom their evil deeds are beautified, and who followed their desires? [14] (Here is) a description of the Paradise that is promised for the God-fearing! In it there are rivers of water, never spoiling, and rivers of milk the taste of which would not go bad, and rivers of wine, delicious to the drinkers, and rivers of honey, fully purified. And for them there are all sorts of fruits, and forgiveness from their Lord. Are they like those who will live in Fire forever, and will be given boiling water to drink, and it will tear their bowels into pieces. [15]

Commentary

Essential Characteristics of Paradise

Verse sixteen mentions four kinds of favours and blessings in the next world, that is, rivers of pure water, rivers of milk of which the taste does not change, rivers of wine which gives delight and rivers of purified honey which will be given to the righteous in plenty.

Worldly waters become polluted by getting mixed with earth, vegetation and other adulterating substances which make them stink. But in Paradise, there will be rivers having un-pollutable water. The river of pure, clean water that will not go bad in taste, smell or colour, (and will flow uninterruptedly without layers of dregs, scum or any other unpleasant-looking substances).

Milk, in this world, is secreted by the mammary glands of female mammals, such as the cow's udders or the breasts of the human female, and soon it starts to deteriorate. In Paradise it will flow in rivers and the Heavenly milk will never be spoilt. Its taste will be eternally delicious, relishing and delightful.

Worldly wine has a foul smell and a bitter taste, (though the ones

addict to it do not feel its bitterness, being accustomed to it). But the Heavenly wine will give endless delight to the drinker. In Sūrah As-Ṣaffāt [37:47] the Qurʾān describes the Heavenly wine as لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُونَ : "which has no headache in it, nor from it will they be intoxicated."

Honey, in this world, is the secretion derived principally from the nectaries of flowers, from which it is extracted by bees in the form of nectar and deposited in their honey-sacs, where it undergoes a certain change prior to storage in the cells of the comb. When it is ripe, that is, it has become sufficiently thick by evaporation, it may now be extracted or thrown from the honey-comb by centrifugal force or by gravity. When it is so extracted, it needs to be clarified of the accompanying particles of wax, scum and other unwanted substances. However, the honey in Paradise will be pure and clean and will be available amply, as rivers of honey will flow uninterruptedly without layers of dregs, scum or any other unpleasant-looking substances.

All four kinds of rivers - of water, milk, wine and honey - are used in their primary senses. There is no need to apply them unnecessarily in their figurative sense. However, it is obvious that the bounties of Paradise cannot be compared to things of this world. The taste and quality of the bounties of Paradise will be unique and can only be experienced in the gardens of Paradise.

Verses 16 - 18

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ
 أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ آنِفًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ
 وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًىٰ وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ
 ﴿١٧﴾ فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً ۖ فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا ۗ
 فَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَهُمْ ذِكْرُهُمْ ﴿١٨﴾

And among them there are ones who (pretend to) give ear to you, until when they go out from your presence, they say to those who have been given knowledge, "What

did he say just now?" Those are the ones on whose hearts Allah has put a seal, and they have followed their desires. [16] As for those who have adopted right path, Allah improves them in guidance, and gives them their piety. [17] They are waiting for nothing but the Hour that it should come upon them suddenly. So, its signs have already come. Then, once it will come upon them, how would they have an opportunity to accept the advice (already) given to them? [18]

Commentary

The lexical item اشراط "ashrāt" occurring in this passage means "signs". The portents of the last Hour starts with the very advent of Khatam-un-Nabiyyīn [the Last of the Holy Prophets] as the end of the Holy Prophethood is the sign of the approach of the last Hour. The miracle of the splitting of the moon by the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been described thus in the Holy Qur'an [54:1]: اقترَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ "The hour has drawn near and the moon has split." - indicating that this miracle is also one of the signs of the last Hour. These are initial portents of the Hour which appeared at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an. Besides, there are many other portents that have been predicted in authentic Aḥādīth, one of which is reported by Anas ؓ in which he says that I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "Among the signs of the last hour is the removal of knowledge, abundance of ignorance, the prevalence of fornication, the prevalence of wine-drinking, the small number of men and the large number of women so that fifty women will have one man to look after them". (Bukhari and Muslim) A version has "knowledge will dwindle and ignorance will be widespread."

Abū Hurayrah ؓ reports Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "When the spoils of war are taken as personal wealth, property given in trust is treated as spoil, *zakāh* is treated as a fine, learning is acquired for other than religious purpose, a man obeys his wife and is undutiful towards his mother, brings his friend near and drives his father far off, voices are raised in the mosques, the most wicked member of a tribe becomes its ruler, the most worthless member of a people becomes its leader, a man is honored through fear of the evil he may do, singing-girls and stringed-instruments make their appearance, wines are drunk, and the last members of this community curse the earlier ones, look at that time for a violent wind, an earthquake, being swallowed up by the earth,

metamorphosis, pelting rain, and signs following one another like bits of a necklace falling one after the other when its string is cut. (Tirmidhi)

Verse 19

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ط
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾

So, know for sure that there is no god but Allah, and seek forgiveness for your fault, and for (the faults of) the believing men and believing women. And Allah knows your moving from place to place and your permanent abode. [19]

Commentary

In this verse the address is to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he is, through an imperative verb, commanded to know that there is no object of worship besides Allah. It is quite obvious that every Muslim has the knowledge of this - let alone the leader of the Holy Prophets ﷺ who should have its knowledge more profoundly. Then why is he enjoined to acquire this knowledge? There can be two responses to this question: it can either mean that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is enjoined to be steadfast in his worship of Allah or it could mean that he must fulfill the demands of his knowledge. Qurtubī cites the incident of Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى who was asked about the significance of knowledge, he replied: Did you not read verse 19 of Sūrah Muḥammad: "فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ" "So, know for sure (O Holy Prophet ﷺ) that there is no god but Allah, and seek forgiveness for your fault. It is required in this verse that knowledge should be acquired before action. Similarly, on other occasions in the Qur’ān, first it is enjoined to acquire knowledge and then to fulfil its corresponding demands. For example, in [57:20] the Holy Qur’ān has said, "إِغْلُظُوا إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ" "Know that the present life is but a sport and a diversion ..." Then it was said, "سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ" "Race to forgiveness from your Lord (57:21)". In Sūrah Anfāl, (verse) the Qur’ān says: "وَاعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

"Know that your wealth and children are a trial..." The demand of this knowledge is mentioned in Sūrah At-Taghābun (Verse 14): "فَاخْذُوا زُرَّتُمْ" "...so be fearful of Him.". Thus on these occasions first the knowledge of

different things are imparted, and then it is enjoined to fulfil the demands of that knowledge.

In this context, although the Holy Prophet ﷺ had prior knowledge of the Oneness of Allah, the injunction here is for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to fulfil the demand of this fundamental knowledge, that is, "وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِدُنُوبِكَ" and ask forgiveness for your faults (47:19)". The Holy Prophet ﷺ is infallible and immune from sin, and therefore the possibility that he would commit sins is unthinkable. Despite this, the possibility of Allah's Holy Prophets ﷺ committing misjudgment in *Ijtihād* cannot be ruled out. But, according to the sacred law, such mistakes are not regarded as sins. In fact, they are rewarded, though the prophets عليهم السلام are told about the correct position, and keeping in view the high status of the prophets, such mistakes too are sometimes referred to as "*dhanb*" (fault or sin), as for instance in Sūrah 'Abasa [80] the Holy Prophets] was criticized for his misjudgment. The details will be set out when discussing that Sūrah. The error of judgement referred to in that Sūrah was not really a sin. In fact, a reward was promised to him for that, but because it was not in conformity with his high status, Allah Ta'ālā expressed His dislike. This type of "*dhanb*" (fault) is referred to in the current verse.

Note

Sayyidnā Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq ؓ reports that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Recite *لا اله الا الله لا ilā-ilāha-illallāh* and *استغفار istighfār* frequently because Iblīs (Satan) says, 'I got people involved in sins and destroyed them, but they destroyed me by reciting *illallāh*, so I got them involved in false and baseless thoughts and notions which they pursue as true, authentic and righteous, (for instance, the common religious innovations (*bid'āt*), because they treat them as righteous,) hence, they do not feel any need to repent for their practice of innovations.

مُتَقَلِّبِكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ, last line (your moving from place to place and your permanent abode.) The word مُتَقَلِّبٌ *mutaqallab* lexically means "turning around or turning over". The word *mathwā* means "permanent resting place". It is open to several interpretations. As a result, the commentators have assigned different meanings to the phrase. As a matter of fact, all the meanings attached to the phrase are correct, sound, authentic and true, because human beings are confronted by two types of conditions: in

the one case their involvement in something is temporary, and in the other case it is permanent. Likewise, in some places man's stay is temporary and in other places it is permanent. In the concluding phrase of the current verse, the word مُتَقَلِّبٌ *mutaqallab* has been used to describe "temporary" and مَثْوًى *mathwā* is used to describe "permanent". Thus this verse signifies that Allah is fully aware of all conditions of human beings.

Verses 20 - 31

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۚ فَإِذَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ
 وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ لَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ
 نَظَرَ الْمَغْشَىٰ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ
 مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ الْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾
 فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ
 ﴿٢٢﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّىٰ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾
 أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا
 عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ ۖ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ۗ
 وَأَمَلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ
 سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا
 تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
 اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَاحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَمْ
 حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾
 وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَלَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمِهِمْ ۗ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ
 الْقَوْلِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ
 الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ ۗ وَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ أَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

And the believers say, "Why has a (new) *sūrah* not been revealed?" Then, once an operative *sūrah* is sent down, and fighting (in Allah's way) is mentioned in it, you notice those who have disease in their hearts, looking to you like one who is faint because of death. So, destruction is very close to them. [20] The (reality of their) obedience and (truthfulness of their) speech is fully known (as being mere deception). So, had they been truthful to Allah, once the matter had become serious, it would have been much better for them. [21] So, (O hypocrites,) do you not apprehend that, in case you turn away (from Jihād), you will spread disorder in the land, and will sever your ties of kinship? Those are the ones whom Allah has cursed; so He has made them deaf, and made their eyes blind. [23] Then, do they not give serious thought to the Qur'ān, or do they have locks on their hearts? [24] Surely those who turn back after the guidance has appeared to them clearly, it is Satan who has tempted them and involved them in far-fetched fancies. [25] That is because they say to those who hate that which Allah has revealed, "We will obey you in some respects." And Allah knows their secret talk. [26] So, how (will it be) when the angels will exact their souls, smiting their faces and their backs. [27] That is because they followed that which has angered Allah, and they disliked His pleasure; therefore He has nullified their deeds. [28] Do those having disease in their hearts rather think that Allah will never expose their grudges (against Islam)? [29] And if We will, We would show them to you, so as you would definitely recognize them by their features. And (still) you will recognize them by the tone of (their) speech. And Allah knows (all) your deeds. [30] And We will certainly test you until We know those of you who carry out Jihād (struggle in Allah's way) and observe patience, and until We check the reports about you. [31]

Commentary

سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ (an operative *sūrah*): The word مُّحْكَمَةٌ *muḥkamah* lexically means "firm". In this lexical sense, every *sūrah* is *muḥkam*, but here it is used in its technical sense. In the technical parlance of the sacred law, the term *muḥkam* is used as an antonym of *mansūkh*, ("abrogated"). Here the word *Sūrah* has been qualified by the adjective *muḥkamah* so that the eagerness of the believers for a new *Sūrah* is understandable only when it embodies an operative divine commandment that is not abrogated.

Qatādah رضي الله عنه says that all Sūrahs which contain the injunctions of *Jihād* and *Qitāl* are operative and not abrogated. As the main objective of this Sūrah is to enjoin fighting and to persuade people to carry out the injunction, the adjectival phrase is: Sūrah *muḥkamah* - indicating the injunction of *Jihād*. (Qurtubi)

أَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ (So, destruction is very close to them - 47:20] The Arabic word used in the text, according to Asma'ī, means that the causes of destruction have approached or drawn near to them (Qurtubi).

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ (So, [O hypocrites,] do you not apprehend that, in case you turn away (from *Jihād*), you will spread disorder in the land, and will sever your ties of kinship? - 47:22). The word تَوَلَّى *'tawalla'* used in the text lexically has two senses: it could mean *I'rād*, that is, "turning away" and it could also mean to be placed in authority over the people. Some of the commentators of the Qur'ān assigned the first meaning to this word in the context of this verse, and Abū Ḥayyān in his *Al-Baḥr-ul-Muḥiṭ* prefers this interpretation, (and the translation given above is based on it.) From this point of view the meaning of the verse would be: If you turned away from *Jihād* [struggling in the cause of Allah] and other injunctions of *Sharī'ah*, you would return to the ancient system of ignorance which Islam has abolished. In the Pre-Islamic Days, according to the practices of *jāhiliyyah*, for centuries they caused corruption and severed ties of kinship. For example, they practiced injustice; they cut each other's throat; one tribe attacked another tribe; they committed carnage and massacre; and they buried alive their daughters with their own hands. Islam abolished and wiped out all these and other heinous practices of the Days of Ignorance. In order to wipe out these heinous crimes of those days, Islam enjoined *Jihād* which apparently seems to be bloodshed, but in reality it is analogous to amputation of the diseased limb of a body, so that the rest of the body may remain healthy. *Jihād* establishes justice and equity and maintains ties of kinship and relationship.

Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, Qurtubī and others take the second meaning of the word *tawallī* in this context, that is, to be placed in authority over people. From this point of view, the meaning of the verse would be: if your ambitions of being placed in authority over people and the affairs of the world are entrusted to you whilst you are morally unhealthy, you would

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cause corruption in the land and cut off ties of kinship and relationship.

Strict Maintenance of Kinship Ties

The word *أَرْحَام* 'arḥām' is the plural of *رَحِم* 'raḥīm' (womb). This is a receptacle or repository in the mother where the young humans are conceived, held, protected and developed before birth. Because that is the source of all relationships and kinship, it is idiomatically used in the sense of human relationship and kinship. Tafsīr Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, on this occasion, has explained in detail the relations covered by the term *dhawil arḥām* or *arḥām*. Islam has laid great stress on fulfilling the rights of relationship. Bukhārī records a Ḥadīth on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه and two other Companions to the effect that whoever maintains good relations with the kith and kin Allah will keep good relations with him, but whoever severs his bonds of kinship, Allah too will sever His relations with him. This Ḥadīth indicates how important it is to treat relatives kindly in terms of words, deeds and wealth. In the same Ḥadīth, Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه refers to the verse under discussion [47:22] and says "Read it if you wish to". In another Tradition, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that there is a sin for which one will be punished, not only in the Hereafter, but also in this world, that is, ... breaking kinship bonds. In Thawbān رضي الله عنه Ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Whoever wishes to have his life prolonged and his sustenance blessed should treat his relatives kindly." We come across the following Ḥadīth in Bukhārī:

ليس الواصل بالمكافى ولكن الواصل الذى اذا قطعت رحمه وصلها

"The person who perfectly maintains the ties of kinship is not the one who does it because he gets recompensed by his relatives for being kind and good to them, but the one who truly maintains the bonds of kinship is he who treats his kinsmen fairly, even though others have severed the ties of kinship with him." (Ibn Kathīr)

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ (Those are the ones whom Allah has cursed - 47:23) In other words, people who cause corruption in the land and break bonds of kinship have been cursed by Allah, that is, Allah has driven them away from His mercy. On the basis of this verse, Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه regarded the sale of *ummul-walad* unlawful. *Ummul-walad* is a term used in Islamic law for a female slave who has borne a child to her master, and

who is consequently free at his death. Thus the sale of the mother would result in separating the child from the mother, and this would lead to severing kinship tie between mother and child which necessitates the curse of Allah. Therefore, the sale of *ummul-walad* was declared unlawful²³.

Law Relating to Cursing a Particular Person: The Issue of Cursing Yazīd

When ‘Abdullāh asked his father Imām Aḥmad about the permissibility of cursing Yazīd, the Imām replied: "Why should we not curse a person whom Allah has cursed in the Qur’ān?" ‘Abdullāh said that he read the Qur’ān in its entirety but he did not find Yazīd is cursed anywhere. The father recited the present verse and said, 'Who could be worse than Yazīd in breaking up relationships? He did not even care for the Holy Prophet's ﷺ relations.' However, majority of the Ummah hold the view that it is not permissible to curse any particular person unless we know for sure that he died in the state of disbelief. We can nevertheless use cursing phrase with general characteristics, such as curse of Allah be upon the liars, curse of Allah be upon the mischief-makers, and curse of Allah be upon the breaker of kinship]. Ruḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī on this occasion has discussed this issue elaborately.

أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا (or do they have locks on their hearts? - 47:24) The meaning of this phrase is synonymous with similar phrases in other verses of the Qur’ān where words like *khatm* or *ṭab* "[Allah] has set a seal [on their hearts] have been used to describe how the disbelievers refuse to employ their hearts for the comprehension of truth, as a natural consequence their capacities to distinguish right from wrong have become atrophied. Carelessly, committing sins all the time is the main cause of this. Allah forbid!

الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ط وَأَمَلَىٰ لَهُمْ (it is Satan who has tempted them and involved them in far-fetched fancies. - 47:25). In this sentence, two acts have been ascribed to the devil: - *taswīl* [meaning the act of decking out evil works fair to some people, and *imlā* meaning the act of giving respite. First, he made their evil works look good and beautiful to them, and then prolonged their false hopes which will never be fulfilled.

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ (Do those having disease in

their hearts rather think that Allah will never expose their grudges [against Islam]? - 47:29)" The word *adghān* is the plural of *dighn* which means secret enmity, rancour, malice or spite. This verse was revealed in connection with hypocrites to expose their bitter hatred and rancour against Islam which they were hiding in their hearts. Outwardly, they expressed their love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and inwardly they harbored violent hatred and enmity for him. They knew that Allah is the knower of the unseen, yet they were not concerned that He would expose their inner secret and covert enmity to the people. Ibn Kathīr says in Sūrah Barā'ah that Allah has described their works, actions and activities which expose their hypocrisy and they would be identified as hypocrites. Therefore, another name of that Sūrah is *fāḍiḥah* meaning exposing to shame or disgrace, because specific qualities of the hypocrites are set out in it.

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ (And if We will, We would show them to you, so as you would definitely recognize them by their features - 47:30). In other words, if Allah wishes, He could pinpoint and define precisely who the hypocrites are and describe their features so that the Holy Prophet ﷺ could identify each hypocrite personally. Grammatically, the Qur'an has introduced this clause by the hypothetical particle *lau* "if". Thus introduced, the sentence implies that what is supposed either does not occur or is not likely to take place. From this point of view, the clause implies that if Allah had willed, He would have pinpointed every hypocrite to you personally, but His wisdom and clemency did not wish to expose them to shame and disgrace in this way, and thus maintain the principle that all worldly matters be decided by their outer appearance, and the inner conditions and matters of the heart be left to the All-Knowing Allah. However, Allah has given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ the insight, so that he is able to perceive into the inner nature and real character of the hypocrites by the style of their speech. This is the meaning of *وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ* "... And (still) you will recognize them by the tone of (their) speech. - 47:30]...". (Ibn Kathir)

Sayyidnā 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān ؓ says that anyone who conceals a secret in his heart, Allah displays it on his face, and brings it out by the slip of his tongue. In other words, in the course of conversation, some such words slip out which express their inner secrets. Likewise there is a Ḥadīth which reports that any person harboring a secret thought in his

heart, Allah puts a cover on it; if it is good, it becomes manifest, and if it is evil, that too becomes manifest. Some narrations of *aḥādīth* have described that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was imparted the knowledge of a group of the hypocrites by name. For example, it is recorded in Musnad of Imām Aḥmad on the authority of ‘Uqbah Ibn ‘Amr ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ in one of his sermons called out the names of particular hypocrites and asked them to leave the congregation. Thirty-six names were counted altogether. (Ibn Kathir)

حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ (...until We know those of you who carry out Jihād,... - 47:31) Allah's knowledge of every person's works and deeds is all-encompassing and eternal. It may be noted here that knowledge is of two kinds: [i] a *priori* knowledge or fore-knowledge, knowledge about a thing before its occurrence; and [ii] a *posteriori* knowledge or -in Mariam knowledge, knowledge about a thing after it has actually happened. Here knowledge refers to the second category. Allah's knowledge of things is since eternity. In this context, the knowledge about things is a *posteriori*, after the occurrence of the events in the external world. (Ibn Kathir) (The purport of this part of the verse is that Allah has enjoined fighting on the believers so that sincere believers may become distinguished from the hypocrites who shrink in horror at the very thought of fighting). Allah knows best.

Verses 32 - 38

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ
 مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ ۚ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ۖ وَسَيُحِطُّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ
 ﴿٣٢﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اطِّيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِّيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوا
 أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا
 وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ ۗ
 وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتْرُكَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٥﴾ إِنَّمَا
 الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌّ وَلَهُوَ ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَمَّنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ أُجُورَكُمْ وَلَا
 يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِنْ يَسْأَلْكُمْوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبَخَّلُوا وَيُخْرِجْ

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أَضْغَانِكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾ هَآأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ
فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ ؕ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ ؕ وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ لَئِنَّم لَا
يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالِكُمْ ﴿٣٨﴾

Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, and oppose the Messenger, after the Guidance has appeared to them clearly, shall never bring harm to Allah in the least, and He will render their deeds vain. [32] O those who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and do not nullify your deeds. [33] Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, then die as unbelievers, Allah will never forgive them. [34] So, do not lose heart, and do not appeal for peace; you will be the uppermost, and Allah is with you; and He will never deprive you of your deeds. [35] The worldly life is but play and pastime. And if you believe and be God-fearing, He will give you your rewards, and will not ask you your riches. [36] If He were to ask you of it, and were to press you, you would show miserliness, and He would expose your grudges. [37] Yes, you are such that you are called upon to spend in Allah's way, but some of you withhold in miserliness_ and he who withholds in miserliness withholds against himself_ and Allah is the Need-Free, and you are the needy. And if you turn away, He will replace you by some other people, then they will not be like you. [38]

Commentary

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَلُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ (Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way ... - 47:32) This verse also refers to the hypocrites, and the Jewish tribes of Banū Quraizah and Banū Naḍīr. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه says that this verse refers to those hypocrites who, on the occasion of the battle of Badr, joined forces with the infidels of Quraysh and helped them in such a way that twelve men of the two tribes took upon themselves the responsibility of feeding the entire army. Each one of the twelve men took turns to organize meal for the enemy camp on different days.

وَسَيُحِطُّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ (...and He will render their deeds vain - 47:32)

Ḥabt-ul-a'māl (rendering deeds vain) could have one of the two meanings: [i] their efforts to undermine Islam would be unsuccessful and fail as explained in the foregoing commentary of this verse; and [ii] on account of their disbelief and hypocrisy, their good deeds - such as charity, free will offerings, philanthropic activities and so on - will all be rendered void and will not be acceptable.

لَا تَبْطُلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ (... and do not nullify your deeds... - 47:33) Here the Qur'an has employed the phrase *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* instead of *ḥabt-ul-a'māl* because the scope of the former phrase is much wider than the latter phrase, because *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* may be interpreted in two ways: In the one case it takes place on account of disbelief which was described in the foregoing verse by the phrase *ḥabt-ul-a'māl* because no action of a die-hard infidel is ever acceptable on account of disbelief. If anyone embraced Islam and later abandoned it, all his good actions performed during the days of Islam will be rendered vain albeit good works of the days of Islam are acceptable. The good works, in this case, will be made vain because of the subsequent disbelief and apostasy.

The other case of *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* is that the acceptability of some righteous deeds is sometimes conditional upon other righteous acts. If the condition is not fulfilled, the righteous deeds will be rendered fruitless. For example, for every righteous action to be acceptable, the necessary condition is that it must be performed exclusively and sincerely for Allah. It must not be performed to make an ostentatious display to people. Let us take a few examples of this rule from the Qur'an: In [98:5] we read:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

"They were commanded only to worship Allah, making their submission sincere for Him, (98:5)".

On another occasion in the Qur'an [39:3] we read:

إِلَّا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ

"Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion" [39:3].

This goes to show that all good works - to be acceptable - must be done with the sincerity of heart and honesty of purpose. Otherwise they will be rendered void by Allah. On a third occasion in the Qur'an [2:264] we read: لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى "O those who believe, do not nullify your charities

by boasting about favour, and teasing (2:264)". This shows that giving charity to a needy person and then following it up by demands of gratitude or insulting words or hurting him in some other way will only nullify his charitable act. This probably could be the meaning of what Ḥasan Baṣrī has said when interpreting this verse: "Do not render vain your own good works by means of sins." Although the apparent sense of this statement is that if one commits a sin, all his good deeds are nullified, yet this being against the well-established position, its real purpose cannot be other than it refers only to those sins that are relevant to a particular virtuous act and which nullify that particular act only. It is similar to what Ibn Jurayj has said to explain this verse: "(Do not nullify your virtuous acts) by doing them only to show off and to win a good name among the people." Likewise, Muqātil and others have explained it by saying: *bil-manni*, that is, (Do not nullify your deeds) by boasting about your favour. Otherwise, according to the unanimity of *ahl-us-sunnah wal-jamā'ah*, no sin - not even a major sin other than *kufr* or *shirk* -- can destroy the righteous acts of a believer. For example, if a believer, who performs his prayer regularly and keeps his fasts, were to steal something, the sacred law does not declare his prayers and fasts null and void or demand him to repeat them. Therefore, in the statement of Ḥasan Baṣrī the word 'sins' refers only to those sins refraining from which is a necessary condition for the acceptability of good works. For example, the acceptability of good works, it is necessary to refrain from *riyā'*, that is, to avoid showing off or making an ostentatious display of accomplishments. Moreover, it is also possible that Ḥasan Baṣrī's statement regarding refers to the deprivation of the blessings of righteous works, and not to the absolute nullification of a righteous work itself. This may apply to all types of sin in the sense that if a believer's sins are much more than his good deeds, the few good deeds that he has to his credit will be devoid of the blessing that may save him from the punishment of his sins. According to the rule of retribution, he will be punished first for his sins and finally through the virtue of his faith he will attain salvation and be admitted into the gardens of Paradise.

Ruling:

If a believer starts a *nafl* (an act of worship that is not obligatory), and then deliberately disrupts it before its completion, this too is deemed

by Imām Abū Ḥanīfah as nullifying the deed, and is impermissible according to him. Therefore, if a person commences righteous acts that were initially not compulsory or obligatory, their completion, according to this interpretation of the verse, becomes obligatory. Otherwise he would be committing *ibṭāl-ul-a'māl* [nullification of actions]. If anyone does this without a legitimate reason or nullifies them purposely, he would be a sinner, and it would be obligatory for him to make *qaḍā'* for such nullification. According to Imām Shafi'ī, neither he is a sinner nor is it obligatory for him to make *qaḍā'*. His argument is that the act was not initially compulsory or obligatory, therefore its abandonment or nullification would not entail a sin. Ḥanafīs argue that the wordings of the current verse are general in their scope embracing all righteous acts, whether obligatory or supererogatory. Therefore, if a supererogatory act is initiated, its completion becomes obligatory. On this occasion, in Tafsīr Mazharī, a large number of *aḥādīth* are quoted and the issue is discussed in detail.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ (Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, Allah will never forgive them...- 47:34): verse [32] has a similar warning in similar words. The present verse [34] seems to repeat almost the same warning. But the difference is probably that verse 32 describes the loss of the infidels in this world, and the current verse describes their loss in the next world as indicated in the commentary. It is also possible that in the earlier verse the reference was to infidels in general which included those people who embraced Islam later on. The ruling regarding them was that all the good works which they had done in the state of disbelief would go to waste. Even after embracing Islam they would not be rewarded for them. The current verse refers in particular to those infidels who persisted in their disbelief and idolatry until their dying day. The ruling regarding them is that Allah will never forgive them in the next world. Allah knows best.

فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ (So, do not lose heart, and do not appeal for peace;) ... - 47:35". This verse prohibits the Muslims to invite the infidels to enter into peace treaty. But on another occasion in the Qur'ān such a treaty is allowed : "وَأِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا" "And if they tilt towards peace, you tilt towards it..." (9:61). This verse indicates that if the infidels want peace, it is permissible to enter into peace agreement with them. Therefore, some

scholars think that the permission in this verse is conditional upon the assumption that the infidels take initiative for peace negotiations. The current verse prohibits the Muslims from taking initiative for peace. Thus there is no conflict between the two verses. However, the authentic ruling is that it is permissible for Muslims even to take initiative in negotiating peace with the infidels if it could be in the best interest of the Muslims - not by reason of cowardice and involvement in a life of luxury. The Qur'an by the employment of the imperative sentence *falā-tahinū* [do not lose heart] in this verse indicates that the prohibition is meant for such an appeal for peace that is based on cowardice and escaping from Jihād. In this case too there is no conflict between the two verses, because the direction of tending to peace in verse 9:61 is restricted to a situation where it is based on the interest of the Muslims, and not on cowardice or leisure. Allah knows best.

وَلَنْ يَّرِيْرَكُمُ اَعْمَالِكُمْ (...and He will never deprive you of your deeds...47:35) It means that Allah will not diminish the reward of the believers. This indicates that if they were to suffer any pain or loss in this world, they will receive a huge reward in the next world. Thus a believer is never unsuccessful even in the face of pain or difficulty.

اِنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا (The worldly life is but play and pastime - 47:36.) As Muslims have been enjoined to fight in the cause of Allah, they will, for this purpose, have to make sacrifices of life and money. But the love of this world is the only thing that can prevent man from fighting. In this verse we are told that neither of these mundane benefits is permanent. After all, they all will perish and come to an end. Even if we succeed in saving them for now, they will be lost another time. The bounties of the next world are permanent and eternal: the believers need to develop love for them - not for the perishable things of this ephemeral world.

وَلَا يَسْئَلِكُمْ اَمْوَالِكُمْ (...and will not ask you your riches... 47:36). The apparent meaning of this verse is that Allah does not demand or urge you to hand over your wealth. But the Qur'an is replete with verses relating to payment of *zakāh*, charities and spending wealth in the way of Allah. Even in the next verse, the reader is emphatically called upon to expend in Allah's way. Thus there appears to be conflict between these verses. Some scholars resolve the conflict by saying that the present verse means that Allah does not need their money for His benefit, but it is for their

own benefit that sacrifices of life and money are demanded of them. Earlier in this very verse, it has been declared expressly: (يُؤْتِكُمْ أَجُورَكُمْ (...He will give you your rewards, (47:36)". The believers are required to spend in Allah's way which will help them in the Hereafter where they will need their righteous works most pressingly. That is where they will be rewarded. This interpretation of the verse has been preferred by Maulānā Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى. A verse of identical meaning is مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ (I do not desire [to receive] any provision from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me...51:57)

Other scholars, however, assign another meaning to the words, "and will not ask you your riches". They say that "asking your riches" means to demand all of one's wealth. Their argument is that this clause needs to be read in conjunction with the next verse [37] which says, *إِنْ يَسْأَلْكُمْوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ* (If He were to ask you of it, and were to press you,...) the word *yuhfi* is derived from *ihfā'* which means to pursue a work persistently and insistently until it is accomplished. All scholars agree that the meaning of verse [37] is that if Allah demands for all of their wealth, they would become niggardly and acting upon this injunction would displease them. This displeasure would become visible at the time of expending. To sum up: the meaning of verse [36] is the same as verse [37]. The general meaning of the former verse is restricted by the latter verse. The meaning of these two verses is as follows: The pecuniary obligations, such as *zakāh*, that Allah has imposed on the believers is for their own benefit - Allah does not need their money or wealth. Further, Allah, through His grace and compassion, has imposed a nominal percentage for expending. For example, only $1/40^{\text{th}} = 2.5\%$ for *zakāh*, $1/10^{\text{th}} = 10\%$ or $1/20^{\text{th}} = 5\%$ for agricultural produce, and one goat out of every hundred goats, have been imposed. Thus it is clear that Allah is not demanding for all of our wealth because that would be displeasing and a burden and it would weigh heavily on us. In fact, He has asked for so little of our wealth that we should discharge our obligation readily and happily. The concluding clause in verse [37] *يُخْرِجُ أَصْعَانَكُمْ* "...you would show miserliness, and He would expose your grudges." contains the word *aḍghān* which is the plural of *dighn*. It refers to secret malice, grudge or hatred. Naturally, man feels unhappy to part with all of his wealth. Even if he does not express his unhappiness openly, he would procrastinate at the time of

payment. Procrastination would disclose his unhappiness. In short, if Allah had demanded from people all of their wealth, they would be tight-fisted and because of tight-fistedness their hearts will harbor rancour, malice and spite against spending in the cause of Allah which would be exposed. Therefore, He has imposed upon their wealth a small and nominal percentage to expend in the cause of Allah, but people are niggardly even in this case. This is what the Qur'ān says in the last verse: **تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ** Allah's way, but some of you withhold in miserliness.". Further the verse reads: **وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَنِ نَفْسِهِ** (and he who withholds in miserliness withholds against himself - 47:38) it means that any person practising miserliness will himself suffer loss or detriment because he will have to carry the burden of failing to fulfil his obligation and thus will be deprived of reward in the Hereafter. This point is made even more clear by saying " _ and Allah is the Need-Free, and you are the needy." In other words, Allah is free of want and beyond any need but man is in need of means of comfortable subsistence. So spending in the way of Allah is for man's own good and to fulfil his own needs.

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبَدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ لَا تُمْ لَّا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالِكُمْ (...And if you turn away, He will replace you by some other people, then they will not be like you. - 47:38) This verse has explained that Allah is the most need-free of all. This attribute is described so lucidly that it brings to our mind the fact that let alone people's wealth, He does not even need their existence. If they stop acting upon His injunctions, He will bring another people who will not turn away from the sacred injunctions, but will obey Him completely as long as Allah wants to maintain the religion of truth, Islam. Sayyidnā Ḥasan Baṣrī says that the reference in this verse is to non-Arabs and Sayyidnā 'Ikramah says that the reference is to Persians and Romans. Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه reports that when Allah's Messenger recited this verse in the presence of the Companions رضي الله عنهم they asked him: "Who are those people that will be brought instead of us if we, God forbid, turn away from Allah's injunctions and those people will not turn away like us?" Sayyidnā Salmān Fārisī رضي الله عنه was sitting among the Companions رضي الله عنهم the Holy Prophet صلوات الله عليه وآله slapped on his thigh and said: "If Faith [i.e. the religion of truth] were to go up to the Pleiads [accessibility to which is difficult], a man of Persian descent will acquire it from there and

act upon it." .

Shaikh Jalāl-ud-Dīn Suyūṭī wrote a book on the biography of Abū Ḥanīfah where he identifies him and his disciples as being the people referred to in the Ḥadīth quoted earlier, because no group among the Persians reached that high point of knowledge where Abū Ḥanīfah and his disciples reached .

**Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
The Sūrah Muḥammad
ends here.**